

## CLAIMS

Having thus described my invention, what I claim as new and desire to secure by Letters Patent is as follows:

- 1        1.    A signal distribution system including  
2                a communication path between a central  
3        facility including a signal source to a plurality  
4        of cable drops,  
5                a condition detector at each of said  
6        plurality of cable drops,  
7                means for providing a sequence of tones  
8        responsive to said condition detector,  
9                means for coupling said sequence of tones to  
10        said communication path during a time slot  
11        determined by a time base, and  
12                means for decoding said sequence of tones at  
13        said central facility.
- 1        2.    A system as recited in claim 1, wherein said  
2        means for providing said sequence of tones  
3        provides a sequence of tone pairs.
- 1        3.    A system as recited in claim 2, wherein said  
2        means for decoding provides a digital signal input  
3        to a printer.
- 1        4.    A system as recited in claim 1, wherein said  
2        condition detector detects at least one of power  
3        outage and ingress.
- 1        5.    A system as recited in claim 1, wherein said  
2        system is divided into a plurality of sectors.

1 11. A system as recited in claim 10, further  
2 including  
3 means for comparing an output of said means  
4 for counting time slots at said central facility  
5 and an output of said means for decoding said  
6 sequence of tones.

- 1 12. A system as recited in claim 1, further  
2 including  
3 means for controlling polling frequency of  
4 said cable drops.
- 1 13. A system as recited in claim 7, further  
2 including  
3 means for resetting said counter.
- 1 14. A system as recited in claim 10, further  
2 including means for synchronizing said counter  
3 with said means for counting time slots at said  
4 central facility.
- 1 15. A system as recited in claim 1, further  
2 including  
3 means for storing power for operation of said  
4 condition detector, said means for providing said  
5 sequence of tones and said means for coupling said  
6 sequence of tones to said communication link.
- 1 16. A system as recited in claim 1, wherein said  
2 means for coupling said sequence of tones to said  
3 communication link includes  
4 means for modulating a carrier signal.
- 1 17. A system as recited in claim 16, wherein a  
2 frequency of said carrier signal is approximately  
3 25 KHz.

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1 19. A method as recited in claim 18, including  
2 the further step of  
3 printing indicia corresponding to said  
4 sequence of tones.

1 20. A method as recited in claim 18, including  
2 the further step of  
3 transmitting a further tone corresponding to  
4 said detected condition.

1 21. A method as recited in claim 20, including  
2 the further step of  
3 printing indicia corresponding to said  
4 further tone.

1 22. A method as recited in claim 18, including  
2 the further step of  
3 storing power for performing said assigning  
4 and selectively coupling steps with electrical  
5 circuits.

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